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MOUNTAIN LIFE & WORK

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ORGAN OF THE CONFERENCE OF SOUTHERN MOUNTAIN WORKERS

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VOLUME XVII

SPRING, 1941

NUMBER 1

THE UNITY OF RURAL CULTURE

ROCKWELL C. SMITH

No one knows better than does a representative of the American Country Life Association that the unity of rural culture is not apparent in the rural cultures with which we deal. Everywhere we observe not unity but difference. Even the same crop is not the same crop in different sections of rural America. I come from Illinois, and we in Illinois think that we know what a cornfield is, but I must confess that I have a new conception of cornfields since I have driven from Nashville, Tennessee, to Barbourville, Kentucky, and from Barbourville to Knoxville. And I assure you that it is not in the cornfield alone that my mind has changed in this last week's experiences. I have been living in many ways in a new world.

Yet, underlying these radical differences, I am persuaded that we can speak of a fundamental unity in rural culture: the unity of rural culture as over against urban culture. And it appears to me that the qualities possessed by all rural cultures as compared with urban cultures, are qualities of such promise and threat for the work we are attempting to do that we can profit by a careful consideration of them.

Most of us in our work and thinking have accepted the United States Census Bureau's definition of rural and urban as normative. That definition marks as urban all persons living in communities of over 2,500 population, and as rural all persons living outside of such communities. Now no one would want to say that number and size had nothing to do with urbanity or rurality, but many of us insist that they are in no sense finally definitive. I spent yesterday in Barbourville, Kentucky, which, with a population of slightly more than 3,000, is regarded as an urban community. No one who visits Barbourville could help but be impressed by the fact that here is a community which is in its activities and points of view as rural as possible. On the other hand, outside of Evanston, Illinois, where I live, there are several

villages which have a population of less than 2,500, and are thus classified as rural, though they are within 20 miles of the Chicago Loop and serve as dwelling places for the more fortunate population of a great city. Before such facts any merely numerical definition breaks down.

In the face of this situation sociologists have been turning to a more qualitative definition of rurality and urbanity. They have told us that we must think of urban and rural as opposite ends of a single continuum on which we might conceivably rank all societies and cultures. At one extreme on the continuum we can build an ideal picture of a completely rural society, at the other extreme a picture of a completely urban society. No culture which we know will fulfill all the qualities which make up the perfect extreme. But any given culture will fit somewhere along the scale between rural and urban. Thus we shall be able to compare given societies or cultures and rate one as more urban or more rural than the other. The unity of rural culture will consist, then, in the tendency of all rural cultures to approximate the rural type which we build up.

First, let us compare rural and urban cultures in terms of the unit of social life. In rural society the unit is the family; in urban society the unit is the individual. This is true because rural society is dominantly agricultural, and agriculture in America is still a family business. The rural school, the rural church, the rural occupational society or union must think in family terms or it cannot succeed. The difficulty experienced by religious educators, for example, in getting what they regard as a suitable departmentalization of work into the rural church educational program is, in my opinion, not due to the essential backwardness of rural people, but to the fact that religious educators have not kept the family unit in mind. In the city, life and work are departmentalized with the individual as the unit. But

farm work and neighborhood living have not been departmentalized as yet, and rural programs that succeed will take this into account.

The next comparison I would make between rural and urban cultures has to do with the human contacts which characterize them. Contacts in rural society are sympathetic, that is, between persons as persons. Contacts in the city are categorical, that is between individuals as functionaries. In urban culture, a post office clerk is only that and we so treat him. We expect him to furnish us our mail and only notice him when he fails to do so efficiently. But who ever heard of going to the rural post office or down to the box to meet the R.F.D. man for mail alone? Our approach to the securing of our mail is at best apologetic. We are first interested in the postman as a man. We inquire about his health and that of his family; we report on our own physical condition; the neighbors and the weather come in for their share of the conversation, and perhaps even crops and politics. Only then does the postman announce that the new mail order catalogue has come or that John has written home from school. The comparison, of course, marks more than a surface difference. The impersonality of urban life safeguards people from sensing the claims of other persons. Rural persons, on the other hand, are apt to make everyone's business their own.

A third contrast lies in the type of group life characterizing each culture. Rural group life is basically that of primary locality and kinship groups; urban group life is, on the other hand, secondary and interest group in nature. In rural society the people who live nearby are a significant part of the social environment; face-to-face influences play a heavy role. In urban life our next-door neighbors have little or no significance in determining our values or points of view; we choose on the basis of common interests those with whom we associate and from whom we make our significant groups.

A fourth basis of contrast has to do with occupation. The occupations of rural people are basically extractive; they deal with the direct appropriation of the goods of nature. And this is true whether our ruralities are farmers, fishermen, or miners. Urban persons, in contrast, have occupations which are characteristically processing or commercial. Along with this there goes the

corollary that rural economic life tends to be self-sufficing—although not nearly as much so as originally—whereas urban economic life is essentially interdependent. The rural person thinks of himself as being able to turn his hand to most necessary work and to supply himself with whatever he needs. The urban person feels helpless before his fundamental needs unless he can purchase the services of others about him who have specialized skills and knowledge.

Out of this fourth contrast there develops a fifth: namely, the contrast between means of social control. Rural life, because it tends to be self-sufficing, turns to custom, or, failing that, to direct action for social control. Urban life, however, turns to and depends upon formal law and the agency for social control. The farmer when he needs meat does not turn to the butcher shop, but to his own cattle or to the wild animals about him. Similarly, when the crust of custom breaks and the old rules do not apply, the farmer, or any ruralite for that matter, quite naturally takes things into his own hands. As he does not need a butcher to provide him meat, so he does not need a sheriff to secure him justice or a court to administer it. Nor does he need an agency to take care of the trouble which comes out of social disorganization. The urbanite, on the other hand, goes to the store when he wants meat; goes to the court when he wants justice; calls the social agency when poverty is to be relieved.

We may summarize by saying that rural cultures have these common features of unity as over against urban cultures: a family unit, sympathetic social contacts, locality and kinship as the basis of group life, an economic life characteristically extractive and self-sufficing, and social control by custom and direct action. Techniques of social case work and group work developed in our great urban centers must be consciously adjusted to these rural characteristics if they are to be applied to and in rural cultures.

I should like to turn now to a second sense in which we may use the phrase "the unity of rural culture." All rural cultures have qualities in common as over against urban culture. But each rural culture has a unity and integrity of its own which the efficient worker with persons must respect if his work is to be effective. Miss Benedict, in her book, *The Patterns of Culture*, underscores this

point. Her emphasis is that each culture is a whole, a whole integrated about certain values; that a given culture accepts or rejects new ideas, new social inventions, new technologies, not in terms of its needs alone, but in terms of these values.

If this is true, then we do not change people in parts alone; but any change in human activity or procedure carries the possibility of unpredictable changes throughout the whole fabric of culture. An illustration from a foreign culture is probably easier to appreciate than one from our own. A missionary to India was shocked when he first saw a native Indian pig. It was a poor and scrawny thing, scarcely a third the size of its Occidental cousins. To this Christian minister it seemed that he could do nothing better for his Indian friends than to improve the pig stock. But what he had forgotten was the meaning of pig. To him, pig meant pork, and a fat pig was a good pig. To the vegetarian Hindu, pig meant scavenger, and the best pig was the smallest pig that would consume refuse. It would do no good to fatten pigs if those pigs were to be used only as scavengers. Only when the values of the people were so changed as to see pigs as pork would any change in pigs be desirable.

I hesitate to taken an illustration from our own culture. How fruitless it is, I am sure we are all aware, to bring to people material culture traits which do not accord with their own value systems. Such action inevitably means either a fracture of the old value systems with consequent personal and social disorganization, or else a use of the material culture trait in a way in which it was not intended. All of us are familiar with the stories of resettled families who were using the bath tub as a convenient coal storage bin, or of the other rural families whose experience of high wages, in Detroit for example, had destroyed their sense of native values and given them only the showy values of cheap furniture in its place. I am not saying that I favor low wages, I am saying that material changes without integration in the fundamental values of a culture or a folk, in the long run have a devastating effect on the personalities of the people involved.

The task of the worker is to sense the values of the culture in which he is trying to work; to discover what the material elements of that culture mean, not to him, but to the people who are

that culture. On my desk is a letter from a friend in a rural community. It contains a long description of the funeral of a member of my friend's family. It is a most mournful letter. The normal reaction of someone with my New England background would be to regard it as an out-of-place parade of grief. Yet I understand what that letter means to my friend, and I am honored by it. It is the sort of letter one in his culture owes to a member of the family not able to attend the funeral. In writing thus to me he is saying that our friendship is such that he feels toward me the obligations owed to a kinsman. Seen from his point of view, that letter is a mark of the depths of our friendship.

This discussion of a particular culture as an integrated pattern leads us to consider a third sense in which we can speak of the unity of rural culture—the unity of rural culture as an ideal. Most rural persons possessed of a unified culture are not conscious of their possession. The task of the worker with rural people is not only intelligently to appreciate the values and the meanings of this culture himself, but to bring a like consciousness to the bearers of the culture. Only as the social technician becomes conscious of the values of a culture can he intelligently work for its improvement. And only as the people who are that culture become conscious of the values and deficiencies of that which is their own, can they profit by the efforts of the social technician. Unless he understands their culture and they also understand it, he will only succeed in making over to his own culture those whom he influences. Schools, settlements, churches run without appreciative understanding of mountain culture will only continue in the future, as they have in the past, to pump leadership out of the mountains. Schools, settlements, churches which understand the values of mountain people, and bring mountain people to a consciousness of these values both in their strength and weakness, will be the basis of a significant and indigenous cultural growth.

Dr. Wayne Gray of Union College, Barbourville, Kentucky, reported in an earlier issue of *Mountain Life and Work* on "Mountain Dilemmas." One statement in his article impressed me as especially significant from our point of view. In general, he says, the evaluation by mountain people of an adult education program was rather

discouraging. Few people felt that they had learned anything new, or, if they felt they had, could tell what it was. One man did report, however, that he had learned that he liked married life. At first we tend to smile at this, but could any discovery be more important? Here was a man who had discovered as an asset, as a value, as something of wealth, what he had formerly taken for granted. He was beginning to become conscious of the wealth of his own heritage.

Dr. Gray also reports the conclusion of another who said that an adult education project had taught him that times were bad. In the previous case we have appreciation; in this case we have understanding. Mountain people will not improve their economic condition markedly until they learn that they are part of a national economy. Appreciation without a basic understanding of the economic interdependence of culture on the national level, is only part of the progress toward an ideal cultural unity.

Again, there is the report of the young mountain couple who came back from their university work in the North to spend their lives in the hills. They purchased a mountain farm and the cabin they built was constructed from mountain materials and in mountain style. Taking these native materials they shaped a home and a way of life which used the available resources and preserved the native values, while taking advantage of modern scientific knowledge and techniques wherever

they proved helpful. Their home was beautiful and clean; it had comfort and efficiency. Yet it was just the sort of home that their neighbors might have. Their farm was so operated as to produce a good family living and to maintain and increase the fertility of the soil; yet it was just the sort of farm which all hill people might have.

The unity of rural culture in the first two senses ought to reflect itself through our work in the unity of culture in the third sense; that is, in the integrated personalities of the participants in rural culture. I think of a Wisconsin farm wife as the most cultured rural person I have ever known. Her acquaintance with literature is largely limited to the English Bible and hymnody of her church. Art, opera, drama—the traditional forms of culture—are largely unknown fields to her. But her own kitchen and home, her farmstead and the spreading acres beyond, are scenes of an activity and beauty reflected in her own personality. Her life is absorbed in the intricate round of the seasons and the eternal rhythms of earth, plant, and beast.

She lives not only in the glad routine of each day, but also in a joyous mood of expectancy for the recurrent miracles of growth and development. And the unity she experiences with nature, she feels also toward her neighbors and the broader circle of her community. Here, in the harmony of a personality at one with its environment, and deriving spiritual enrichment from that environment, lies the goal of those workers who hold in their hearts the welfare of a people.

Medicine has succeeded in healing the sick man. Its future task might well be the healing of the sick society . . . The saving of lives is not enough. The perfecting of lives should be the aim. Medicine must ally itself with those forces which make for the best access to the materials and opportunities which promote happiness and stimulate physical and moral perfection in men and women. Medicine, in the end, must be concerned for cultural values—the passion for wisdom, beauty, and justice. These are the real expressions of health.

—James Peter Warbasse

Organized Working Together for Better Living

GEORGE M. NELL

It was a real pleasure for me to receive the invitation to come to your Southern Mountain Workers' Conference to tell how our little rural Catholic parish in Illinois has been trying to bring about better living through organized working together. The invitation was pleasing to me for a double reason. For one, I am convinced Protestants and Catholics will have to work together more than we have in the past, if we want to have the better living our Christian civilization could and should give us. Not only will we have to work together more, but we will have to do it in an organized manner, for it is only in that way that we can make the application of Christian principles to everyday problems effective in terms of better living.

Furthermore I was happy to be invited to speak to you on this subject of "Organized Working Together for Better Living," because of our real interdependence. What you in the rural South are going to do or not do in the near future is going to mean much to us in the rural North. Unless we know what you are doing and adjust ourselves accordingly, we will have much unnecessary trouble ourselves and may cause you a lot of unnecessary trouble also. So the sensible and the Christian way is to arrange to work together for our mutual benefit. And to be effective, this working together must be organized, not merely locally, but also on a national basis.

I fully realize that what our little parish has done will in itself not matter much beyond our own parish limits, but the agencies that have worked together on an organized basis in the parish are important, and it is these agencies and their work that I wish to stress in telling you the story of our parish activities. Luckily these same agencies are operating in practically every rural community, county, and state, as well as in our nation. Still another fine thing to remember is that the activities and methods of these agencies are adaptable to changing circumstances, so that the people who make up these agencies can fashion them to suit their own special needs according to localities and circumstances.

My parish of fifty families is located in the

northwest part of Jasper County in Illinois, with a few families living in Effingham County. All the families are farmers, with the church out in the open country five miles from the nearest grocery store. Most of the families live within a radius of four miles from the church. Within the same radius there are three other churches— Missouri Synod Lutheran, the United Lutheran, and the Methodist Church. I was appointed the first resident pastor of the parish July 1, 1922. Before that it had been a mission church.

The parish is located about twenty miles south of the Illinois black dirt cornbelt, one of the soil aristocrats of the world. In comparison our clay soil is common, and valued at only a fraction of the cornbelt soil.

When I came to the parish in 1922, I learned from the people that farm conditions were not as good as they had been, and that something should be done about it.

I knew little or nothing about farming, and fortunately knew I knew little about it. So I looked around to see who could help us study our problem and also help us plan and carry on whatever needed improvement we would have to make. Jasper County had no Farm Bureau and consequently no Farm Adviser. But our neighboring county of Effingham did, and so we invited their Farm Adviser to come to the parish meetings to help us figure out what we could do to improve our conditions. As the problem of our Catholic farmers was the same as that of the non-Catholic farmers, we asked all the farmers of the community to come to these meetings held at our hall. They came, and instead of parish meetings we had community meetings.

After some study and discussion we decided as a community that we needed a complete change in our type of farming. As a community group we also agreed on a number of facts including the following: our soil needed lime, humus and drainage; we needed crop diversification; we needed a number of special cooperatives, both for better production and marketing; also better roads, rural electrification, more and better recreation, home improvement, and more favorable legislation. To

get all of the above, and a number of other things not listed, we agreed we had to have organization, and adopted the Farm Bureau as our general farm organization through which to get the above things for our community.

We needed many things, most of them tremendously difficult to get under our circumstances, but by working together in an organized way during the past eighteen years, we have managed to get all of the above things we decided we needed. With more working together over a still longer period, we have every prospect of more completely achieving the things we set out to get to make the "better living" for our community and our county.

So far the only agency mentioned in this long-time organized working together has been the County Farm Bureau, but we called in many other agencies when needed. The Extension Service of the Illinois College of Agriculture and of the U. S. Department of Agriculture were frequently called on. So was the Illinois Agricultural Association, our State Federation of County Farm Bureaus. We also used the Farmers' Institute when possible, and closely co-operated with the Soil Conservation Program of the AAA. Likewise we worked with the public schools, with private and public health agencies, chambers of commerce, railroads, public utilities, in short with any group or agency willing and able to cooperate with us.

After our community had worked out many of its problems with the help of the neighboring county Farm Bureau, we decided we needed a county Farm Bureau in our own county, and in 1936 enlisted the help of the farmers all over Jasper County to organize our own county Farm Bureau, thereby making organized working together for better living in our county still more effective.

Gradually we learned that for more effective organized working together, we needed all the churches in the county to work with us, and so with the help of the pastors working in the county, the "Campaign for Christ in Jasper County" was organized in 1940. During the one year it has been functioning, it has become a strong influence in the county for future organized working together for better living.

The question is frequently asked whether this working together program our parish has been carrying on since 1922 can be adopted and carried

on by other churches? I would say it can, because most rural churches are in communities with problems similar to ours, and the same agencies are either already working in their community or can be brought in. Furthermore, all of these agencies welcome cooperation from the church if it is properly offered and given.

By "properly" I mean that in this cooperation the church does not encroach on the rights and work of the cooperating agencies, nor do these agencies intrude on the rights and work of the church. We have found this easy, as we have kept the religious services of our parish strictly apart from the community economic, social and recreational activities, in which the members of our parish participate as members of the community and not as representatives of our church. In other words, the church strictly takes care of the spiritual life of its members, while the other agencies take care of their respective jobs and are responsible for the successful carrying on of their activities. This division of responsibility is extremely important because it is a valuable safeguard for the parish. For instance, if a cooperative does not succeed, as occasionally happens, the church does not get the blame.

This same division of responsibilities furnishes parish members an opportunity to apply the Christian principles taught them by their church to the solving of their everyday problems of life. So the more efficient the church is in teaching the Ten Commandments and their practical application, the better chance the economic, social welfare, and recreational agencies working in the community have of doing a good Christian job.

Another good reason for this division of responsibility is that it leaves time and energy for Church to take care of the spiritual life of its people. For instance, practically all of my parishioners belong to a dozen or more cooperatives. If we did not have this strict division of function between the church and the other agencies, there would be no end of trouble and it would mean the end of parish cooperation with the various agencies, with consequent loss to the people.

In our experience we have found that, in addition to the division of responsibility, we have need of a coordinating agency through which our community activities, including our many cooper-

atives, can function effectively. Because of our interdependence with other communities in the county, state and nation, we needed an agency which could coordinate our activities in all these respects. We picked the Farm Bureau as our general farm organization, because it operates in our community, township and county, in our state and other states, as well as in the nation, and therefore is in a position to gear our needs and facilities with the needs and facilities of all the other communities wherever they may be. This means that we and all the other farmers of the nation have a nationally functioning vocational

group organization, able and willing to represent us in the national working together for better living.

During the questioning of the morning and afternoon session, many of the details of our working together in our community have been answered. If there are still more questions about details you wish to ask, I will be pleased to answer them this evening if I am able. In conclusion, I wish to express the hope that organized working together will bring about better living in your communities as it has in mine.

THE CONFERENCE DISCUSSES

Following out the theme—"The Democratic Community"—of the twenty-ninth annual meeting delegates divided into three groups of approximately fifty each to discuss: "The School as a Community Center," "Putting Our Folk Religion to Work," and "Cooperatives and the Common Folk."

Serving as consultant to the "School as a Community Center" group was C. B. Loomis, Executive Secretary, Greenville County Council, Greenville, South Carolina. For the group discussing "Putting Our Folk Religion to Work" Rockwell C. Smith, Associate Secretary of the American Country Life Association, served as consultant. And on "Cooperatives and the Common Folk" the consultant was the Rev. George M. Nell, Director, Co-op Parish Activities Service, Effingham, Illinois.

In addition to the consultants an able chairman was appointed for each group, but every one of the members was free to express his own point of view and to challenge ideas with which he disagreed. These sessions have been reported by the chairmen.

The School as a Community Center

George C. Bellingrath

The first problem which confronted this group may be stated as follows: Does the school as it now exists reach the lives of the people of mountain communities? In this connection the school

came in for much criticism. One speaker contended that the school sometimes is an end in itself, being operated for the teacher rather than for the pupils. The improvement of the school itself without references to its service to the community is often the apparent purpose. The conclusion of the group was that the school should have as its purpose the continuing growth of all the people of the community toward the good life.

In many mountain communities many school-age children are out of school. One speaker stated that in his county 85 percent of the high-school age were not in school. One man's reaction to this was unexpected. He said that such a situation was a tribute to the native intelligence of the young people, of the Kentucky mountains, that they showed good judgment in being unwilling to submit themselves to the program at present offered by some of the high schools. It was generally agreed that one way to attract these people into the school is to so revise the curriculum that it will offer courses vitally related to the lives of the people.

"The unorganized educational forces of the community are ten times as effective as the things which the school is doing. The community is educating itself and the school has very little influence." These statements were challenged but it was generally agreed that the school must take into consideration the needs and interests of the people and become vitally related to the ongoing and everchanging stream of life of the com-

munity if it is to be effective as a leader in educating the people and raising the standard of living of the area.

It was suggested that if the school would do a good job of educating children and young people, a program of adult education would not be necessary. On the other hand, it was pointed out learning continues throughout life, and life itself offers a constantly changing situation to which continual adjustment must be made. Continuing education is therefore necessary for both adults and children. The school diploma might well be discontinued because, marking as it does the completion of school work, it is often accepted as a sign of completed education.

Since the community should be responsible for the education of all of its people, the community school is no longer "the little red school house" on top of the hill. The community school cannot be confined to a building nor to the teachers and officers who work in this building. In order to equip people for the complex and changing life of the world, all the educational forces of the community both actual and potential should be coordinated and each one used to the fullest capacity. In this program the present school has an opportunity for leadership. A community center cannot be geographical nor can it be confined to a building. It is rather the nerve center out from which flow those impulses which activate the community to do something for itself and from which go those ties which help unify the forces of the community and give them direction. The school, by modifying its curriculum to include more vital topics and by changing its organization so as to include representatives from all educational forces, can become the center of activity and progress in any community represented in this conference.

In an area of the country where so many problems are crying for solution some agency should undertake to change the lives of the people. The school can achieve a place of leadership in the mountains by including in its curriculum those things which people need to build a better home life for themselves and to achieve an enriched personality, to solve the sociological and economic problems which underlie all other difficulties of the region, to make use of the opportunities for recreation and relaxation which are at their dis-

posal, and to make the vocational readjustments and receive the vocational training which they need in order to be able to earn a better living. By thus developing a program which will touch the lives of people at such vital points the school can render a great service and be a potent factor in changing the life of the Appalachian area.

Putting Our Folk Religion to Work

A. L. Roberts

Perennial in our discussions of the impact of our church upon life in the mountains is the question, What is to be our relation to the emotional sects which seem at times to run rough shod over our every constructive endeavor? No matter how inadequate the statement of it—call it emotional sect or legalistic sect, or what you will—we recognize the problem.

A great deal of time might be spent in a search for those elusive words which will adequately sum it all up, and perhaps it is because of this seeming defiance of exact definition that we have now called it "folk religion." A better reason for so designating it is that it seems in many instances to have been created, and in other instances to have thrived, because of the conditions of life of the people to whom it has made its great appeal. Many of its characteristics are indigenous to the life of that people.

Whether or not we are willing to designate these sects as our present folk religion, there is clearly before us the need to carry our Christian religion to our people in terms and through experiences which are real to them and in a way that will satisfy their legitimate longings. We need to formulate a positive program for doing this and in so doing must face the following four questions: 1. What are the particular strengths of these sects which at present constitute our "folk religion?" 2. What are the problems and weaknesses of our traditional religions in reaching the people? 3. Where might we appropriate "folk religion" strength to strengthen our traditional religions? 4. How can we cooperate with these sects in harnessing all religious groups in a forward-going program for our mountain region?

Some sixty people interested in the rural church worked out, in the course of a four-hour discussion, the following answers to these questions. While

the wording might lend itself to various interpretations at one point or another, one dare not tamper too much with these phrases if the integrity of the group discussion is to be respected.

What are the particular strengths of these sects?

1. They provide lay participation.
2. They are elementally emotional, providing recreation and release.
3. They are a Bible religion.
4. They are a class religion (the religion of the disadvantaged).
5. They are a group religion (placing more emphasis on the group than on the individual so far as worship services are concerned).
6. They provide an easy, other-worldly religion.
7. They are cyclic religions, with alternating seasons of great fervor and of inactivity.
8. They are militant and dogmatic.
9. They are perfectionist. (Making few demands on the individual, such religion enables him to have a sense of achieving integrity by meeting these demands.)

What are the problems and weaknesses of traditional religions?

1. Lack of understanding and sympathy: Intellectually we perceive, but not having been so disadvantaged, we do not understand their point of view.
2. Imposition of external standards—of worship, literature.
3. "Not sitting where they sit," or not sharing as Muriel Lester and Kagawa did.
4. Taking away what people have without making replacement with an idea or practice which will adequately meet the felt need.
5. Expense to the people: It requires nice clothes, and money for the collection.
6. Complaint rather than work: We complain about evils and perhaps about people's errors without striving zealously to remove them.
7. Peace for peace's sake: We sometimes follow a policy of appeasement with evil—i.e. we do not boldly criticize such practices as handling poisonous snakes and fire.
8. Conventionality: We are too easily satisfied with the forms of religion without the substance.
9. Failure to use simple ideas and language in striving to get our message across.
10. Traditional religions are too "programized"

and "institutionalized."

11. Lack of humorous self-criticism: If we could see our selves and what we are trying to do as others see us, and laugh at ourselves, that might help.
12. There is false and exaggerated promotion of work to outside agencies, leading to resentment on the part of the folks with whom we are working.
13. Localism.
14. There is paternalism: in the sense of "We come to do you good," and also in where the final power of decision lies.

Where might we appropriate strength?

1. Provide for local and lay participation.
2. Minister to emotional needs:
 - a. Through warm human fellowship—singing, recreation, cooperation.
 - b. Through providing for complete religious experience for each individual, suited to his temperament.
3. Provide intelligent, intensive, and reverent Bible religion.
4. Work toward closer identification with the folk with whom we are working.
5. Develop a program to meet folk needs such as that proposed by Friends of the Soil.
6. Provide a whole Gospel with proper emphasis on and interpretation of immortality.
7. Arrange a well-balanced observance of the church year rooted in rural experience.
8. Provide sacramental emphasis, as a means of giving concreteness to a group to whom the abstract does not appeal.
9. Insist upon clear-cut, total, and active commitment. Let us take our gospel and our religion as seriously as the best of them take theirs.

How cooperate in a forward-going program?

1. Through Christian fellowship:
 - a. In worshiping with them, i. e. those of fine, sincere type (they are not all alike anymore than are the members of other churches).
 - b. In service, e. g. helping to rebuild the house of one of the neighbors who got burned out.
 - c. In recreation—especially for youth.

- d. Through public and private commendation of community service rendered by these groups.
2. Through cooperation in service projects, in meeting community needs.
3. Through cooperative Christian education experiences:
 - a. Provide for conferences where all religious groups might study to attain knowledge and skills recognized as common needs.
 - b. Invite all sects to share in ministers' associations, workers' conferences, and like activities.

Cooperatives and the Common Folk

C. C. Simonton

A group of fifty people met on the morning of March 5, 1941, at 9:30, in the First Baptist Church of Knoxville, to study and discuss the subject of "Cooperatives and the Common Folk." Mr. Simonton opened the meeting by defining the "common folk" as people driving their living from the only source available to them, the soil.

Two questions were outstanding during the entire discussion. These were: How can the common folk use the cooperative methods as a step forward in life? And how can we as community workers get cooperatives to take a form of action in the rural areas? There were many interesting solutions to the latter and the consensus of opinion seemed to be that the same approach probably would not suit every community. It was here that Father Nell made his first contribution to the group and we found his information and experiences to be of greatest value to us. He advised all to beware of too much technical information involved in cooperatives when starting out in a new community. This should be left for the leaders. It was in this connection that he also stressed the importance of cooperation with the other already existing organizations. It is a bad policy to attempt the solution of a problem without joining hands with those groups which have had previous experiences.

Before any community can become organized there must be an interested person or persons who will be willing to assume the role of leadership. Afterwards the abilities of the people and the needs of the community can be determined. In the light of this it was suggested that a survey of the community be made and studied. Plans should then be laid out and their application attempted. In order to accomplish most every person possible should be given work to do since this promotes greater interest and progress. It will then be necessary to have regular meetings and these can best be held at the community center or in homes.

Since there are many types of cooperatives and perhaps the need for entirely different ones in certain areas, it was necessary for us to discuss their many uses and, in some cases, combinations. Consumer and credit cooperatives were suggested as those of the most importance. Producer and medical cooperatives were considered and the feeling was that these would certainly follow the first two mentioned. Several present gave reports of such activities in their communities and the problems faced by all were somewhat the same.

It was interesting to note that everyone agreed upon the necessity for cooperatives and upon their untold benefits, but still, at the close of the meeting, the big problem remained: How can we get the common folk to accept cooperatives? The one surmise was that if we are to do the movement justice it is imperative that the advocates provide for interesting and invigorating discussions of cooperatives and their values.

These lists are, of course, suggestive and exploratory. Some phrases stimulate vivid pictures of our experiences; others may not seem to apply. These suggestions, however, are a beginning on a problem on which, it has aptly been pointed out, we need to do some further "soul-searching" and planning. Nor must we stop with this as a gesture in the right direction. We must "go ahead boldly" in acting out our common ideal of Christian brotherhood, persistently, patiently, and prayerfully.

NEW DIRECTIONS OF SERVICE

The Conference of Southern Mountain Workers takes pride in presenting a group of short sketches of worth while and creative projects that are springing up in answer to particular needs. These reports were presented at one session of the Conference in Knoxville.

Alpine Forest Reserve

Bernard M. Taylor

Alpine is a small community on the shoulder of the Cumberland Plateau. The land about the village, over the 25 square miles of the church parish, is hilly, varying in elevation above sea-level from 650 feet at the lowest point on the river several miles away, to 1800 feet on the summit of Alpine Mountain. The fertility of the soil is less than that of the poorest soil described in reports of Father Nell from southern Illinois. The trend is still downwards, as may be seen in the discovery that taxable wealth in Overton county has dropped 25 per cent during the past 15 years.

Twenty years of Presbyterian work has been carried on at Alpine, in conducting schools and supporting the work of a church. Gradually the state and county have assumed responsibility for the school work, and during the past year the agencies of the Board in Alpine have been able to discontinue their full-time school work and take account of the situation. Finding that most of those trained in the schools left the county to live in places where their talents might bring them larger cash returns, the school people decided to establish a Rural Life Center, for the purpose of training adults and young people who might become the citizenry of the area at least within 100 miles of Alpine. The Rev. William G. Klein is director of this experiment, and Miss M. Elizabeth Hill is assistant director.

Conscious of the importance played by trees in the past history of this region, and believing that the land is suited for tree-culture and unsuited in large degree for clearing and cropping, an experiment in forestry has been begun. State and Federal Forest Service advice was sought. A survey by an employee of the U.S. Forest Service, Mr. Claude

Bell, of Atlanta, Georgia, revealed that Alpine lies in a sizable territory which is 80 percent woodland. The report pointed out pessimistically the sad condition of much of this woodland area, due to fire and unwise cutting or pasturing practices, and made it plain that profitable use of the trees would probably be postponed for many years. Headquarters of the Forest Service in Washington received this report as a sign of the need for work here.

After a careful survey of a piece of mountain land a well-known friend of the Cumberland Mountain region made possible the purchase of about 1200 acres, of which not more than 45 acres is cleared. Strategic homesteads may be planted over this piece of land, for its care and protection, but the purpose in mind is the establishment of a demonstration in profitable use of forest land. We have been told that the State Forest Service, with the pioneering leadership of Mr. J. O. Hazard, and the special work in our area of Mr. John N. Tyler, will cooperate with the U. S. Forest Service, led by Mr. Charles Evans, district chief in Atlanta, to set up a Forest-Farming Project at Alpine this summer, under the provisions of the Norris-Doxey Act. The center is offering office quarters for the forester whom we expect to settle with his family as permanent residents of our community.

In writing of the coming of this man we put down the words hesitantly, afraid of "counting our chickens before they are hatched," but on the strength of the promises of two friendly officials as named, whose hands, we pray, will not be tied by the program of national defense so as to interfere with this plan. In any case we expect to go forward in forestry, with a laboratory for the training of those who attend sessions at the Rural Life Center as well as for local citizens, demonstrating the best the government knows of sustained-yield cutting, recreation uses, wild-life refuge, scientific marketing of logs, and, so far as possible, processing the lumber into higher products here in the community. The shop, which is equipped with a small set of machinery at present, should be busy as local craftsmen work on the timber products of the Alpine Forest Reserve. This reserve should be visited by people from far and near for its rec-

reational value, and on these visits, people should observe modern practical forestry in a form which can be adapted to the farm woodlands of our area. Three dollars is considered a moderate possible net profit from woodlands in our county. If the Alpine experiment helps farmers to realize this profit, small as it may seem, that will be an improvement over the present situation in which they are paying taxes on land too much of which is burned over once or twice a year and yields no profit; it will be a peg to which we can hang part of our weight as we seek to stop the loss of county wealth. Our slogan might be worded something like this: *Trees will help take care of you if you will help take care of trees.*

No small part of the inspiration for this program comes from the Rev. Charles T. Greenway, who has supported us as Board representative from the beginning.

Trees figure in most of the great dramas of the Bible—to the climax on Calvary, when a tree held up Jesus, crucified. We believe that in modern hilly country there is laid on Christians a responsibility for the Christian use of trees and of forest resources, that a more abundant life may be provided for those for whom He died. It is in this spirit that we seek to develop the Alpine Forest Reserve.

Some day income from this land may come directly to the community to maintain its public institutions. Perhaps it will help to support Church and Center activities. Its influence should affect other woodlands all around us. Whatever it does or does not do, it will be an effort in the direction of Christian stewardship of natural resources.

Asheville Farm School's Post High School Department

Arthur M. Bannerman

Farm School's Post High School Department provides an informal vocational and cultural experience for high school graduates who do not plan to go to college.

Of course, post high school study of one kind or another has been in practice for some time—it is not something new under the sun. Many secondary schools, for example, had had in recent years, some of their seniors return after graduation to take certain additional courses.

This practice began at Farm School a good many years ago, but these first graduate students were enrolled for a purpose different from that of the students who make up the post high school division today. Usually they were deficient in certain subjects or in credits necessary for college admission, or they wanted simply to "brush up" on this or that subject before going on. Thus their post high school study was meant primarily to bridge a gap between secondary school and college. The occasional exception was the student who enrolled for typing and other business courses in order to prepare himself for a job. To that extent only was the early post high school work terminal; today, on the other hand, its whole emphasis is on terminal education.

The change in the educational philosophy of the post high school division went hand in hand with the transition which took place in the high school division, and thus it emerged as something entirely different from what it was in its infancy.

To illustrate: in the high school division the vocational or shop courses—printing, agriculture, carpentry, woodworking, electricity, mechanics, business, and their several subdivisions—are no longer supplementary to the "white-collar" subjects; rather, they themselves have become the aristocrats of the curriculum. (Naturally, these are correlated with basic courses in English usage, mathematics and the social sciences). From this it will be seen that the high school division has now become in its organization what, for the most part, it has always been in fact—namely, a terminal educational experience. In other words, the great majority of students in the high school division at Farm School do not go to college, and the curriculum is now designed for that majority.

The post high school division is built on the same pattern as the high school. However, it is not designed for Farm School graduates (who have already had a vocational major), but rather it is intended to meet the needs of those graduates of standard public secondary schools who cannot afford a college experience or who are not interested in studying what one ordinarily gets in college.

The post high school courses are organized on a two year-pattern, and each student selects his field of vocational specialization from among the major departments; namely, agriculture, carpentry and woodworking, electricity, mechanics, business, or

printing. There are, in addition, choices within these general fields. For example, the students in agriculture may study general farm management or he may specialize in poultry or dairy management. And over and above these subdivisions there are special fields of interest such as landscaping, laundry management, baking and so forth.

Enrollment in the post high school division, moreover, has implications beyond those usually associated with a "trade school" course of study, for the student is encouraged to take projects in Bible and religious education, social culture, dramatics, music, physical culture, health, and associated fields.

When a student has completed the requirements of his vocational major—this may take more or less than two years, for each student progresses at whatever rate his individual abilities and industry permit—he applies to the staff for a certificate of graduation. Naturally, this certificate has no official standing in the academic world. It is not a junior college diploma, and its only worth depends upon the faith which prospective employers may have in the abilities and usefulness of a Farm School graduate. Fortunately for the graduates, this certificate is one which already is not entirely without honor among those who are looking for able young men. And so long as the school keeps its standards high and refuses to recommend or certify poor workmanship, it should have reason to be confident that its certification will create its own professional standing.

The Campus Cooperative

Frank C. Foster

Preceding the actual organization of the Campus Cooperative at Asheville College, several attempts were made to interest students and faculty in cooperatives. It was Ellsworth Smith's visit in February, 1939, however, that touched off the necessary spark. And it was the active interest of Frances Triggs, then Dean of Women, that led some of the girls to follow up his visit with informal discussions and study of cooperatives in theory and practice. On one hand was the desire of this nucleus group to master the fundamental principles of cooperatives; on the other a hope that the campus store might be remodeled to render more effective service.

Before long a general education campaign was launched, with the leaders going from room to room in the dormitories, selling their proposal for a new store and enlisting the support of the students. Realizing that the movement was actually their own—in efforts expended and in benefits reaped, alike—the Student Council recommended to the administration the enlargement of the existing store to include the postoffice, bank, book store, dry cleaning and shoe repair service, as well as a soda fountain and light lunch service.

The college had completed the remodeling of the office basement, by June, 1939, and with the summer school the Campus Cooperative opened for business.

A comment made by the president of the Cooperative in a report last year is a fitting summary of the attitude of those who have been most active in promoting the organization:

If there is anything unique in the Campus Cooperative it is perhaps in the nature of its starting out. The usual procedure is for a cooperative movement to spring from the pooling of purchasing power on one or two articles. In this case the seed was sown in the desires of the student body but the plant was already full grown. The Cooperative took over the student store and have remade it into a cooperative enterprise. This transition offered many interesting and trying problems which have added to the happiness of being able to do something worth while.

For two years the store has been operating with a student as manager, and several other students working as clerks under the campus work program. A full-time manager was employed for a few weeks last year. Members elected from the sophomore, junior, and senior classes constitute the Board of Directors, with Mr. L. R. Hamilton, Business Manager of the college, and the other faculty members of the Student Business Committee as advisers.

At the end of March a balance was reported of \$117.01. According to the statement issued at the last meeting of the Co-op, there are 108 student and faculty members holding one or more \$1 shares. Perhaps the most gratifying returns

have been less tangible—the gradual assuming of responsibility by the students for their own organization and the slow permeation of the campus community by the conviction that cooperatives actually mean an enriched way of living through living together.

Evarts Community Church Service Center

Eugene H. Rainey

Fifty years ago the Extension Board of the Congregational Church began a pioneer work in the wilderness of Harlan County. The first approach was through a church, with an academy to teach elementary and secondary subjects to youth of a wide area who had no other opportunity for an education. This type of work was continued until the coal industry brought in more revenue and population, so that the county took over the public school work. Then followed an interval of twenty years in which a free church was struggling to find a place in the area of intense denominational loyalties and other restricted forms of expression. Four years ago it was decided that the only justification for the informal church in an area of many churches was to find a program that would meet specific needs. Accordingly the service as described below was begun with the erection of a modern fireproof building to fit the program planned. It has been proven that the building is the foundation for the work.

The Building. The first floor of the building has a large recreation hall serving for play, dining hall, auditorium and class rooms; next to this are a kitchen, dressing rooms and stage, beneath which is the heating plant. The vestibule has office and stairways leading to all parts of the building. On the second floor is the Chapel with worshipful chancel, and the parlor, used jointly for a class room, small assemblies and circulating library; above is a balcony for special features. About the building are lovely windows and other decorative features carrying symbols of the Christian faith.

Interpretation of Christian Mission. The work of any institution depends upon the interpretation of its task. The territory around Evarts is at present one of the heaviest population centers in any rural industrial area in America. It is the center of a valley life that includes 25,000 people attached to the soft coal industry. It would seem

that its mission should be to help by solving the problems created by this new and changing population. So the church has assumed that any needed service is its Christian task. In two years of program building the following work has been attempted, with surprising response from the people.

The most neglected area of service in this region is recreation and social life. Almost daily schedules offer folk games, other indoor games and parties, seasonal athletics, handicrafts, hikes, camping, nature study, music, dramatics, story telling and good reading for the enjoyment of many of varying ages. The library carries about two thousand books and fifty magazines, with a free circulation of twelve hundred per month over a territory extending sixteen miles in one direction, and up two other valleys to a distance of six miles each.

It is found that in a section of great tension there are many problems on which people continually seek help. So assistance is given through counseling and teaching for health, marriage, vocations, school life, housekeeping, conservation of incomes, and citizenship. Much time is given to letter writing about pensions, insurance, national defense, compensation and other labor problems. Scores of needy persons receive food and clothing and constructive advice.

Worship and instruction is promoted by the graded church school, Vacation Bible schools in seven centers, a Youth Church, and the Woman's Missionary Society. A great effort is made to give the people some of the very best in sermons, lectures, teaching, music and dramatics. This work is supplemented by stereopticon and motion pictures. These forms of service are continually overlapping, proving the assumption that the church is called to meet any human need. The work is so arranged as to make it impossible to say that "this is play" and "this is worship." Nor can any one safely state that one thing is religion and another social service. All that man can do through Christ and his own efforts to help faltering humanity is the Jesus way of meeting life situations. The Youth Church demonstrates this point. It was organized by young people in connection with their week-night recreation program. They came to see that life when it is pure is part of God's plan, and so in appreciation for the play

life they have come to habits of worshipping Him. The young people conduct and promote their own programs, asking for the cooperation of others as the need arises.

Cooperation. The minister with his wife are the only regular members of the staff that has reached more than three thousand people during the past year with definite forms of services. Many local people have volunteered their help. A great number of persons, agencies and institutions give their cooperation so as to make this work possible. The church in turn lends its influence and plant as an agency through which more people may be reached for those contributing to the general welfare of the whole community. By this help and influence which other agencies supply, the church has been able to suppress most of the criticism that was directed against social work through the church. Two thirds of the salary comes through the Church Extension Boards and the rest from local sources. There is a working agreement between the extension boards of the Methodist and Congregational Churches whereby further cooperation on the field is possible.

The Farm Family Plan at Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School

H. L. Fry

The Farm Family Plan at the Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School is that part of the school which admits select rural families into a rotating farm settlement established for the purpose of educating whole families. The children attend the local day school which comprises the first nine grades, and the central boarding school which includes the tenth and eleventh grades (the last two years of high school) and two years of vocational junior college work. The men attend night classes, taught by teachers of agriculture and farm shop, while the women attend classes taught by the teachers of home economics.

These families are furnished an average-sized, well-planned farm, on which to make a living while at the school. A painted cottage with electric lights and running water, a barn and out-buildings, and a one-and-one-half-acre garden, a good pasture, fruit trees and berries, and plenty of firewood are furnished free to the families, while

rents in keeping with local rates are paid on the crop land.

Two modern church plants, a community center and recreational building, along with the facilities of a grammar school and high school and a junior college educational center afford these farm families a wholesome religious and social atmosphere. Church and Sunday School attendance is encouraged, along with participation in all movements and activities for community improvement.

Even though most families come to the school poorly equipped for farming, they leave at the end of the allotted period well-equipped with livestock and farm machinery with which to make a good living on the farm. Those who cannot become landowners are in demand as tenants by landowners in the immediate surrounding communities. Out of seventy-nine families which have benefitted by the program, thirty-four are now living as owners or tenants in the immediate school district, while thirteen other families are living in the adjoining communities. This makes a total of forty-seven families who have benefitted by the program, who are now living within six miles of the school.

Highlander Folk School

Myles Horton

There are two underlined sentences in a January, 1929, issue of *Mountain Life and Work* that contributed to the founding of the Highlander Folk School three years later. In an article called "Industrial Development in the Southern Mountains," T. Russ Hill wrote: "The real work of us who care is whether or not we shall be able to keep the education of our people abreast of this development." The second sentence was from an article entitled "Just Change or Progress?" Eleanor Copenhagen had written: "We live in a myth of bygone days."

Highlander did not start as a school with a cut and dried program. It grew out of the natural relationship of the community of Summerfield and three or four people who moved in, planted a turnip patch, and set about cutting the winter wood. The neighbors, like many people in the Cumberlands, often worked in industry. Some dug coal in the county, while others found jobs in near-

by textile mills, or in Detroit or Akron. Highlander had no obligation to develop a program along academic lines; its only obligation was to the people. The community responded. With the cooperation of the local people a three-fold program was evolved which enabled the school to serve a larger area. The larger program is possible only because Highlander is rooted in the community. Without such rootage, there would be little vitality and realism in the school's program.

At present a staff of seven conducts a year-round program of community activities, extension work, and resident terms and institutes. Men and women from the South are sent by their unions and cooperatives to six-weeks residence sessions. In addition, there are residence sessions for work camps for college students and writers.

The extension work consists of participation in conferences, assistance to unions and cooperatives, getting out publications, library service, and the loaning of staff members to various organizations.

In the community, groups and classes for all ages are meeting in pottery-making, wood-carving, folk dancing, group singing, and dressmaking and remodeling. There is a producers' cooperative which combines the growing of raspberries with the making of patchwork quilts.

Since the aim of the school is to make for democratic living in all aspects of life, it necessarily follows that the relationship of the teachers to the students and to the community is based on democratic principles. The school is cooperatively owned and run by the teaching staff, with the help of an active executive council, the students, and the community. The strength of the school is in the people who know they have made and can remake its program.

The Highlander Folk School has been attacked by predatory interests who fear democracy in action; but unless there are deeds to match the words, democracy is meaningless. It is sound education to practice what you preach.

The school has been misunderstood by many who have difficulty in classifying it. Life is something of a jumbled up affair and people seldom stay the same long enough to be catalogued. Consequently, a school geared to the everyday lives of men, women, and children, must forego the satisfaction of fitting neatly into an artificial framework.

A Land Project

Olive D. Campbell

Any school which has as its special objective the building up of country life must face, sooner or later, the problem of land ownership for its young people.

The John C. Campbell Folk School is now fifteen years old and we have arrived at the point where a number of our students are married and ready and eager to begin the long path toward owning a farm. We have been able to meet this desire in a small way, through a fund of \$9,000 given us three years ago to administer in the interest of farm ownership for our old students. Our first loans were exceptions, made to three older men who wished to equip themselves for producing Grade A milk. These were short time and will soon be paid. Such loans are not likely to be repeated, for all the fund is needed for the original purpose.

Few old students have been able to accumulate much capital. Loans are based on our knowledge of the individual through his living and working in the School family for two or three years. We know his working and staying ability, interests and cooperative attitude, and feel that these furnish a reasonable guarantee for a loan, though a mortgage is taken on the place bought. Interest for land is two percent, for buildings and equipment three percent. The general plan of payment and authorization is flexible, being worked out with each individual.

Five young couples have now taken loans, and their hope and the energy that springs from it are very revealing. The whole plan is an experiment. Doubtless we shall have many problems and adjustments, but we feel there are real possibilities of success. Most of the payments are long-time, but we shall be able to finance a new couple from time to time. Even five energetic, forward-looking young couples cannot but have a strong influence on the life of the small community in which they live, and they also help to stabilize the Cooperative. That older local people are as convinced of this as strongly as ourselves, is most reassuring. As one of the older men said, "A community can't do any good if the land is going into hands of no-account people. This movement will mean more to the community than anything you have done yet."

Pine Mountain Community Group

Birdena Bishop

Just a line divides the well-ordered, full, soul-satisfying life within the bounds of Pine Mountain campus from the handicaps, malnutrition, and sickness without. Shall there be engendered in our boys and girls a social consciousness, eyes to see, wills to alleviate distress, visions of a happier, better-housed, healthy, literate society? The answer is obvious. The answer lies, not in theorizing about what young people shall do when they reach more mature years, but in guiding them into doing something corrective and constructive here and now. Pine Mountain's "community group" is a class in practice—active participation in community affairs. It had its small beginning barely four years ago, and by the end of the 1939-40 school year it had assumed such a role in interpreting school and community to each other that the services of a full-time supervisor or coordinator had become necessary.

This year's community group—thirteen girls and seven boys who comprise the junior class—have engaged in five major types of work; namely, home visiting, school visiting, infirmary service, health clinics and pack-horse library. Ordinarily half of the group journeys out for a full day of field work on Tuesdays, the other half on Thursdays. The remaining three days are spent at campus classes—sociology, hygiene, art, recreation supervision. At one double period, designated as "general conference," the entire group comes together for discussion of problems; it is here that ideas are pooled and activity initiated. With the simple philosophy of "help and be helped" the members of the group go to work.

Our home visitors, with their brown canvas bags containing first aid kits and whatever else they wish to carry to facilitate a day's service, trek up and down the lengths of five creeks which converge near the school. To isolated homes they bring friendship and good cheer; suggestions and services which come out of their own resourcefulness and out of the combined thinking of the group when they come together in general conference; the services of school, county, state and federal organizations. The girls are privileged to spend as much or as little time in any one home as they see fit. They may engage in work

planned the previous week, or in anything that falls to hand at the moment. They are useful proportionately as they are possessed of ingenuity, initiative and a willingness to help. They have proved a vital link between doctor, infirmary and homes. Whereas mothers formerly were afraid to come to the infirmary to have their babies, they come there now as a matter of course. The girls establish themselves as real friends, they put in long arduous days, they recognize the value of what they are doing and are happy in the service.

The activity which employs the largest number of boys and girls is working in nearby one-room schools during the rural school year and continuing after school is out; two, three, or four boys and girls (always at least one boy and one girl) spend one day a week at each of five one-room schools. Their purpose is to assist the teacher in ways most suitable to her, but for the most part, teachers have so welcomed the leadership in extra-curricular activities that they insist upon our taking over. The day is filled with games (indoors or out, according to the weather), ballad singing, art projects, sewing classes, wood-working, cooking, menu-planning, and improvement of school grounds. During the course of the year cabinets, tables, benches, and enclosures for hot lunch kitchens have been completed by the boys; curtains, hand towels, tea towels, pot holders have been made by girls. Boys are now laying stone walks, cleaning, leveling, planting, generally improving school yards; girls are concentrating on making interiors more efficient and attractive.

A community girl is on duty each day at the infirmary, where under the direct supervision of the school nurse and doctor she becomes familiar with all phases of hospital routine. Community people come and go as patients and visitors; a community student is always there to receive, comfort, and render service. On two afternoons a week girls travel with the doctor to outlying clinics acting as secretary and nurse aid. All of this is invaluable by way of preparation for those who wish to pursue nursing.

One day a week another girl makes a fifteen mile circuit on Sunny Jim, our horse, functioning as a pack-horse librarian. For this purpose the group has its own community class-room library. Cataloguing, checking in and out, circulating, giv-

ing away books and periodicals which can no longer be circulated, familiarizing herself with the reading tastes of people, and creating new reading appetites, these are the tasks which confront our librarians.

There are other types of service. On Sunday afternoons two girls have been giving reading lessons to a man who wanted to learn to read the Bible. He read some passages of Scripture to them last Sunday. A note came a few days ago asking for one of our carpenter boys to come to a home to build a kitchen cabinet and take his "pay" in poplar lumber. We shall find good use for that poplar some place where there is none available.

The community group acted as host to two hundred community friends who came to the campus one Saturday last October for a day of ballad singing, guitar playing, set running, baseball, folk plays, good things to eat, and just plain visiting. In turn we have gone out to enjoy some jolly times at box suppers, molasses "stir-offs" and P. T. A. meetings.

All the small returns add up to a great deal. Our boys and girls are becoming community conscious.

Practical Homemaking

Lula M. Hale

Last week I took a walk on our small demonstration farm with the eighteen months old daughter of our first staff marriage. We met the poultry man coming in with the eggs and I suggested he show them to her. As he put this half-bushel basket of enormous pearls on the ground before her she exclaimed, "Oh, prettily!" I tell this story because it demonstrates one point in a way of life for a people.

Of the various activities going out from Homeplace the one which is probably most closely connected with farm life is that of itinerant teachers in Home Economics. There are 134 girls who have classes with our two teachers: 45 are in a little high school just established near us; the other 89 are scattered along a twenty-five mile stretch of Troublesome Creek. Farm women living near the country school houses allow us the use of their kitchens and equipment. The food for classes is grown at Homeplace. Older school girls, and out-

of-school girls as well, are invited to join the classes. The teacher works on regular schedule, traveling from school to school on foot, horseback, bicycle, Greyhound bus, and Homeplace Bookmobiles, covering an average of 125 miles per week. We have found this a practical method for a super-rural area where no Homemaking is taught.

Mountain Maternal Health League

Sylvia Gilliam

The congested area of Harlan County, Kentucky, where thousands of rural people are living in slum conditions, presented an acute problem as regards the need for a definite program to promote better health and to safeguard the lives of its mothers.

The housing condition of the area is very inadequate, both in number of houses and in sanitation measures. Some families were found to be living in barns, garages, and one or two-room shacks, each waiting its turn to get a house in the camp, where company houses are crowded together in narrow valleys. Because of unhealthful condition under which the people live, there is an urgent need for a family planning program that the mothers may preserve their vigor and bring healthier babies into the world.

Even though the mothers live in very close contact with each other so far as exterior conditions are concerned, they nevertheless retain certain qualities and habits of mountain life which have been theirs for generations and live in isolation, too reserved to seek out help.

For these reasons it was felt that in order to reach these mothers, a visiting nurse, working under the supervision of a medical board, according to the plans of the Maternal Health League, should go directly to their homes with contraceptive advice and materials. These are simple to use and inexpensive, the League providing them where mothers cannot afford to pay.

The majority of mothers visited were young and eager to learn how to plan for and space their babies. The doctors have gladly directed us and the County Planning Council and the ministers and social workers in the particular mining sections in which I have worked have been very co-

operative, referring patients to me and becoming enthusiastic about the work which has been done. A social worker writes, "Can't you come over and help us? There are many who need you so badly. Our doctors would be glad to have you come. There are mothers in community after community up among the hills who have absolutely no way of getting to a clinic or to a doctor."

This Maternal Health League visiting nurse service has been in progress in Harlan County for six months. There have been approximately 400 home visits made. Ours is a research as well as

health and social service project. The majority of the case histories have been taken of women who are in desperate need of family planning. Birth control information has been most welcome to these mothers because they can see the unfairness in having more children than they can possibly feed, clothe, and educate. In especial need are those with tuberculosis, rheumatic heart or any other serious disease where further childbearing should be avoided. They are entitled to a reliable source of information such as the Mountain Maternal Health League, with headquarters in Berea, provides.

Annual Report of Staff and Committees

One session of the Conference was given to reports of the staff members and the work of committees.

Executive Secretary

Helen H. Dingman

Last year I gave a brief historical sketch of the evolution of the business organization of the Conference of Southern Mountain Workers, its various services and working commissions. This time I shall hold my narrative to the calendar year, 1940. Since a little later in the meeting you will be hearing from our staff members who are working in the field and from the faithful chairmen of hard-working standing committees, my report narrows itself to the administrative load of the Conference office and to our publication, *Mountain Life and Work*.

If you should call on us in Berea you would see that Berea College has given us generous and pleasant quarters to carry on our many activities. There is the big outer office where Miss Gentry, Miss Black and student helpers work; my inner office made colorful by the weavings and carvings of the Southern Highland Handicraft Guild; and another office which is the headquarters of our field workers. Three typewriters click fairly steadily, but even so they can not always keep up with all the production demanded by these same field workers and committee chairmen as well as by the administrative affairs of the Conference

itself—the general correspondence, the publication of *Mountain Life and Work*, the book-keeping, and so forth.

I am telling you all of this so that you may realize how lusty and growing an organization you have accepted the responsibility of supporting. There is no better way for me to gauge its progress than to let my memory go back, not so many years, to a tiny little office and to a half-time secretary who was able to do all the necessary work.

And while we are talking of support let us deal concretely with dollars and cents. You can see how closely we count them when I tell you that our income from individual members is just \$17 more than last year, and add, sadly, that the amount contributed by schools and centers has decreased by \$27. We have 284 individuals, in memberships ranging from \$1 to \$10, and 26 different centers, with contributions from \$2 to \$25, sharing in the support. The question, why not more, is for you to help me to answer. If the Conference is a cooperative working fellowship serving the region as a whole, why do not more of the mountain centers and workers feel the need of the group thought and action?

Other sources of income are the church boards, the gifts from which this year have totaled \$325, and the American Red Cross. Then back of all of these stand our good friends among the foundations and sororities who contribute toward the administrative support and make special services

possible. Without them we could not carry on and yet personally I feel that unless we prove by increased support the value of the Conference to its members we can not go on counting upon subsidies from foundations and other agencies. The very fact that individual institutions are increasingly having a more difficult time to raise their support makes even more necessary our co-operative planning and services for the mountain field.

It wouldn't be a Knoxville Conference unless you heard my voice saying, "*Mountain Life and Work*, only one dollar a year." Yet in face of a decreasing subscription list I wonder how long we can continue saying that. If the publication is as valuable as we are constantly told and if the sentiment is that the Conference should continue publishing it, we shall either have to increase the subscription list or the subscription price. A very practical way to cast your vote would be to hand in your dollar at the desk or, better yet, to take one of the Conference memberships which includes the magazine.

But as important as is financial support I must not devote my whole five minutes to mundane figures. There is a more intangible reckoning of devotion to the Conference, expressed in the pooled hours of thought and work of an ever increasing group. The greatest joy in my work comes through the working with others. The program of this very Conference meeting is the expression of the group, not only in its planning but in its execution. Every article printed in *Mountain Life and Work* has been freely given. Hours of time in addition to the cost of travel have been contributed by the members of our working commissions.

Nor can I close without paying grateful tribute to a staff devoted to the upbuilding of the Conference, to a chairman who has led us faithfully and most efficiently for three years and to a loyal interested Executive Board that is always ready to give counsel and assistance. The Conference of Southern Mountain Workers is truly yours because you are making it yours through democratic, cooperative sharing. My conviction is that its future depends upon our ability to bring more and more people and institutions into this working fellowship in which differences are laid aside and unity is strengthened by a single devotion to a common cause.

Adult Education Cooperative Project

C. C. Haun

The Adult Education Cooperative Project has been concentrating its effort, during the past six months, in communities where the most consistent development has been taking place in local study and cooperative enterprises. Brasstown, North Carolina; Pleasant Hill, Big Lick, Allardt and Alpine, Tennessee; and Berea, Kentucky, have been the main centers of activity.

In most cases it has taken several years for the leaders to become sufficiently convinced that the group study club method is a sound way to neighborhood rehabilitation and that the study club is a realization of fundamentals in democracy and the surest way to develop cooperative enterprises which will improve the economic life of their people. Those who have gained this faith realize that this movement is still a very tiny infant which will only grow as the environment is deliberately prepared for its nurture.

The study club leaders see that other converts must be won by the slow process. Also, study clubs have been seen to start, then waver, and in time, through patient encouragement grow into steady, substantial service. Experience is showing that small cooperative enterprises will also find their way through failures and successes as their members learn how to put their new cooperative idealism into practical, every-day business projects. The leaders recognize, too, the special difficulty in this region due to the religious, social, and economic environment that has been producing extreme individualism. In this environment people will not seek or find the new promised land without the prolonged, consistent efforts of co-operative prophets.

The Adult Education Cooperative Project director has been aiding the local study club leaders in several ways. Printed materials have been secured for them. Indirect guidance has been given through counsel and conference. Instruction and study has been developed through institutes and the Berea Short Course. In the past three months old study club groups have been encouraged through visitation. New neighborhoods have been sought in remote sections seldom contacted by religious, social, or agricultural agencies, in order to see if study clubs could be

started. There has been immediate response in a large percentage of these most needy neighborhoods; usually, however, follow-up work is necessary. New study clubs that have been started this winter in the older centers designated above have been more stable and have gotten into study and action much more rapidly. Altogether, more than fifty study and cooperative groups have been in action during the past winter. Some of these are beginning, while others have been adding to their lists of achievements.

In Big Lick, Tennessee, the Farmers Association has acquired more farm machinery; a cooperative bull association is being formed; thirteen families are in the homesteading process; effort is being made to secure rural electric lines; and the service of a doctor is being sought by the Health Association.

Pleasant Hill and three nearby neighborhoods continued their study of credit unions until sixty members were in line and a federal charter secured; their cooperative store continues its successful development, while the combine cooperative paid over \$350 on its equipment and is looking forward to a successful summer and fall season.

The Ravencroft mining community in Cumberland County, Tennessee, is starting its cooperative store after a series of studies.

At Cumberland Homesteads, the Health Association, composed of 160 families, employs a resident physician and is developing an educational program; a small group of young people has been studying folk games, and a group of homesteaders has raised \$400 towards a fund of \$1000 with which to start an independent cooperative store.

Bakers Cross Roads and other neighborhoods in Cumberland County have been having meetings during the winter.

On February 17th the first associated meeting of study clubs in Allardt, Tennessee, was enjoyed; more than half of the members of the three clubs were present. The poultry, health, and recreation study clubs each reported on its work. In the future monthly meetings each club in turn will have charge of the program.

The Fentress County Council has recently bought sound motion-picture equipment, and during the past several years has also been approaching other enterprises through the study method. Sharps Place in the east end of Fentress County has recently organized a study club.

In Jackson County, Tennessee, New Bethel has had three active groups: one of farmers, another of women, and a third, a club of older girls.

Overton County, Tennessee, has farm and craft groups around Alpine, Livingston, Oak Grove and Hilham. The Alpine Farmers Institute, February 24-26, attracted more professional rural leaders than farmers but the interest shown made the Institute valuable. Study club groups were formed which worked with practical problems such as the cooperative buying of farm supplies, credit unions, farm financing, cooperative health service, nutrition, and the live-at-home program.

In the Brasstown area of North Carolina, cooperatives and credit unions have been the concern of most study groups. Farm problems, poultry, and home supplies have also been studied. New clubs were organized this winter in Pine Log, Bellevue, Warne, and Brasstown.

Around Asheville, North Carolina, the Farm School has been conducting an extension service over a wide area. Asheville College has a successful cooperative store run by the students, and it sponsors community activities in Brittain's Cove.

On January 7, twenty-seven men and women from North Carolina, Tennessee, and Kentucky came to Berea College for the first study club Short Course. The fields of study and discussion included: study club methods and materials, cooperatives, folk games, folk music, credit union, agricultural problems, and community enterprises.

The Adult Education Cooperative Project experience during the past two years indicates that the Study Club movement develops best when the professional leaders and lay people in a community believe in the value of the new method. If the Adult Education Cooperative Project could expand its field work until a hundred or more centers were being transformed by this democratic process of self-study and cooperative action, then sufficient momentum would be gained to repeat the Nova Scotia transformation in the Southern Appalachian Mountains.

Recreation Service

Frank H. Smith

The present report deals with a three-fold recreation program conducted under the auspices of the Conference of Southern Mountain Workers, the

University of Kentucky and Berea College. The itinerant service of the Conference, which is now in its eighth year, will be described by Miss Marie Marvel, who has succeeded Mr. John Morgan. (Mr. Morgan and Mr. William Klein, a member of our Conference Recreation Committee, are now studying at Pendle Hill, Pennsylvania.)

A month of field work for the Conference of Southern Mountain Workers was spent at Piedmont College, Demorest, Georgia, in June, 1940. The service was chiefly of an extra-curricular nature. However, academic credit in Physical Education was allowed under certain conditions. In addition to a well-organized series of meetings with the student body, the program gave a place to the Demorest citizens and included a project of supervised play for community children, of ages seven to fourteen, conducted under the sponsorship of Piedmont College.

Berea College serves as hospitable host to the Christmas Country Dance School, sponsored by the Conference of Southern Mountain Workers, and likewise to the Mountain Folk Festival. The sixth Festival will be held on the Berea campus, April 17-20, 1941. Of former festivals two have been held at the University of Tennessee, in connection with the Conference of Southern Mountain Workers. For the remaining three Festivals we have enjoyed the facilities of the Berea College campus.

Berea College became a headquarters of our recreational movement in the fall of 1937. The opportunities for recreational leadership training, together with the general educational importance of Berea College, were considered by Miss Dingman, Mrs. Campbell and others to be exactly what was needed for the permanence of our recreation movement. I am glad to report that good progress has been made in this process of establishing a "home base." The secondary and college courses in recreation taught by Miss Gladys Jameson and myself, together with a number of other courses leading to recreational skills, and the extra-curricular activities, including the field trips of the Country Dancers, of which I am director, are all included in the program—in which so many schools, community centers, churches, agricultural groups, and colleges are engaged—of building a firmer foundation for better social and recreational conditions in the Southern Highlands.

The Agricultural Extension Service in Kentucky and elsewhere throughout the United States has a federal responsibility under the Smith-Lever Act of 1913 to serve the social and recreational as well as the agricultural needs of rural life. In this service as Recreation Specialist for the University of Kentucky, I was employed from September 1, 1940, to January 31, 1941. This field work was devoted to fourteen counties in eastern Kentucky. The institutions served in this way were as follows: 10 grade schools; 15 high schools; 1 NYA housing project; 3 colleges; 2 churches; 1 demonstration farm and community center; and 1 agricultural experiment station. In addition a few visits have been paid to other centers in response to special invitations. All the above engagements are, when possible, worked out in relation to the field work of county and home demonstration agents, with particular reference to 4-H Clubs.

The University of Kentucky has during the five months service allowed one day per week to office work in the interest of the entire recreation movement in the Southern Highlands. During the second semester while employed by Berea College, I am permitted to handle the correspondence for our movement. The office facilities of the Conference of Southern Mountain Workers at Berea have again this year been at my disposal. The Mountain Folk Festival organization has contributed toward office maintenance.

Leave of absence was generously allowed by the University of Kentucky in order that I might serve as executive director of the Christmas Country Dance School.

And during the year several articles have been written for bulletins and magazines.

Itinerant Recreation Service

Marie Marvel

The schedule of the itinerant recreation service has taken me into two schools in Kentucky, one in Georgia, one in Virginia, and five in Tennessee. In addition there were week-end visits to other centers near-by.

In each center work has been done with children—large groups of them through the public schools—including singing games, singing, and some choral reading. The program for the high-school

age has been similar—folk games and singing. In each center an effort is made to help the group discover the rich material which is their own. In two colleges, folk game and singing demonstration work with children was done for practice teachers.

Contrary to a common belief, the people welcome a recreation program. In none of the communities which I have visited have I found a hostile attitude. Teachers and parents appreciate the program. There is an eagerness to gain a better understanding of the functions of play. The teachers and leaders form voluntary groups to avail themselves of training and to become acquainted with the materials to be used in going forward with the work.

Itinerant service can be considered only as a breaking of ground. Each community must study its own resources and needs and prepare to carry on activities introduced during the two weeks; local leaders are urged to take advantage of the training offered at the short course of the John C. Campbell Folk School, Brasstown, North Carolina, or the Christmas folk dance school at Berea, Kentucky. Incidentally, there is an opportunity to bring about a better understanding of the whole Conference program, and of the relation of the different services to the schools and centers.

Health Committee

Edwin E. White

Very soon after its appointment at the annual Conference at Knoxville two years ago, the Committee on Health decided that there were at least three lines along which work for better health in the mountain area could be undertaken by a committee representing such a voluntary organization as the Conference of Southern Mountain Workers: 1. A health study of the region that will reveal the actual facts and conditions, as a way of getting something done about them. 2. An effort to secure the utmost cooperation among all agencies interested in and working for better health in the mountains, so that their fullest resources may be brought to bear on the situation. 3. The encouragement of experimentation and research in ways of meeting the special health needs of the area.

The work of the committee during the past year

has been almost entirely within the first and second of these fields. Along the line of careful study of conditions, our original hope was to secure the backing of some foundation for the making of a very able and thorough survey. While still hoping for this, the committee felt that some studies ought to be undertaken without delay and that there were perhaps no persons better prepared to start such studies than the workers in the mountain centers themselves. Accordingly, some survey blanks were worked out and offered to all who would use them. The response has been most gratifying. A large number of communities in several mountain states have been studied. These studies have revealed most interesting facts to the workers who made them and to all others who have seen them. For example, in a progressive rural community on the Cumberland Plateau, a community that has had many advantages and is far above the average, the entire population of a few more than fifty families was carefully studied. Their cash income for the preceeding year averaged \$230 per family, and this in spite of the fact that one family took in \$1000 and another \$800. One family reported a cash income of \$50 and another of \$35. On the average, these families spent a tenth of their cash income for medical care. But this did not secure them an average of two calls a year by a physician, because a doctor's visit costs from \$15 to \$17 in this community; the families live that many miles from the county seat where the doctors are. Of course, the people go to town for medical care when they can, and call the doctor only in cases of very urgent need. In six cases of childbirth in this progressive community, only one mother had pre-natal care.

Thus far the committee has found no way to summarize and publish the data revealed by these studies, since no one of the members can possibly put the necessary amount of time on the project. But some offers of assistance have been received from educational institutions and other agencies and it is hoped that the results of the studies may soon be put into form to be released. The committee is most grateful to those who have made the studies and will be glad if other workers will undertake to study their communities.

Most of the work of the committee during the past year has been in the second field. It is clear that a vast amount of good could be accomplished

if the full resources of all agencies interested in health in the mountains could be brought to bear cooperatively on the situation. From the first, the committee pondered ways of securing this co-operation and especially ways of getting all these agencies together to think through the problems and make common plans. Soon there were hopes of big health conferences to bring together representatives of all the agencies. Of course, these would have to be held by states because very many of the agencies are set up along state lines.

At a meeting of the committee in Asheville early last summer, it appeared that conditions were propitious for such a health conference in western North Carolina. The best way to make plans seemed to be to call together workers from mountain centers who knew the problems and the region, so a planning conference was called. The response was excellent and the interest eager. It soon developed that arranging for the kind of conference we had in mind would be a long and arduous undertaking. Instead of one planning session, a whole series has been held. Representatives of more and more groups have been brought in until these sessions became good sized conferences themselves and most helpful to those who attended. It was thrilling to find how many agencies are concerned about health in western North Carolina and are eager to cooperate.

At the first planning conference, Dr. Walter Wilkins, co-ordinator of health and education for North Carolina, joined the group. He has contributed invaluable leadership ever since. Miss Ruth E. Grout, senior supervisor of health education for the TVA, also attended the first session and has kept in touch ever since. She proposed the outline for the Conference program: 1. What are the problems we face? 2. What resources do we have for meeting them? 3. What next steps should be taken? A little later the group was joined by Miss Weaver of the State Department of Health, who has taken a most active and helpful part in all the work since.

When our work started there was a bit of a tendency to wonder what the professional workers in the field of health might think of the activities of a voluntary committee like ours, composed largely of laymen. Our experience has shown that the public health people are delighted with

this interest on the part of lay workers and very glad to cooperate.

Present plans are to hold the Health Conference for western North Carolina in Asheville, Tuesday and Wednesday, June 10 and 11, with headquarters in one of the large hotels and meetings in a downtown church. All agencies, centers, and groups interested in health are asked to send representatives and the public will be invited. The sessions will be mostly for study, but one big public session is being planned when it is hoped to have an inspiring speaker and to secure time on the air. All members of the committee on health and all interested workers from the whole mountain field will be welcomed at this conference, with the hope that similar conferences may be held later in all our states. The planning of this conference has been in the hands of a North Carolina group, with Mr. E. C. Waller as chairman and Miss Margaret Forman as secretary. Committees are now at work on program, promotion, and arrangements.

In the third field of its interest—the encouragement of experimentation and research—the committee has not had much opportunity to work thus far. It has heard with great pleasure of pioneering health projects in several places and hopes for the day when financial backing will make it possible to sponsor such efforts.

Our gratitude goes out to the Sigma Phi Gamma Sorority, which has continued generously to provide funds for child health work in many centers in the mountains, and we are especially encouraged by the efficient and enthusiastic leadership of their international welfare secretary, Miss Margaret Pace, who is one of our number in all this health effort.

Friends in several places have contributed to a small fund from which the absolutely necessary expenses of this committee may be met; we are grateful to them.

Rural Church Committee

Eugene Smathers

The tentative aims of the Rural Church Commission, as worked out last year are:

1. To give greater dignity and significance to the work of the rural church and to farming as a

way of life.

2. To promote fellowship and further cooperation among rural church workers in our area, and to relate them to other rural movements.

3. To develop goals for the rural church which will help to make religion the qualifying factor in every experience of life.

4. To implement the work of the rural church by finding, adapting, or creating suitable materials and methods and by making these available to rural church workers.

5. To acquaint rural workers with agencies which may be used in the promotion of a finer rural community life.

6. To study and appraise local problem situations as requested, in the interest of comity and a more vital religious program.

7. To deal with the problem of finding and training leaders for rural religious work.

8. To seek solutions of the problem of equitable living standards for rural church workers and adequate support of the religious program.

Since last year the Commission has had two meetings. The November meeting studied how to give the rural church a larger place in the Conference program, and plans were proposed for the Knoxville meeting. The Commission was pleased at the great interest shown in both sessions of the discussion on "Putting Our Folk Religion to Work" and in the evening meeting on "The Rural Church and Cooperatives." We wish to express our appreciation to Rockwell Smith and Father Nell for their contributions.

At the meeting, March 4th, the Commission effected its permanent organization with Eugene

Smathers as chairman and Orrin L. Keener as secretary.

It was the sense of the meeting that the group should act as co-sponsor, with the Fellowship of Southern Churchmen, of the new movement, Friends of the Soil.

Plans were made to enlarge the Commission and to enlist the cooperation of others interested in its aims. These plans are to be carried out by the officers in consultation with the Executive Secretary of the Conference.

We recommend to the Executive Board that the Conference of Southern Mountain Workers affiliate with the American Country Life Association.

The Commission plans, early in the year, a two or three day meeting for the study of the major problems of the rural church in the mountains and the development of a program of action for the next year. It requests that the Executive Board seek such financial support as will make possible this program of study and action; the program contemplated would include such items as the following,

a. Bringing to the attention of our rural church workers resources for rural church work, and supplying through cooperative action materials and supplies particularly suited to rural service.

b. Itinerating to our rural churches resource men such as Dumont Clark of the Lord's Acre Movement, and specialists from various church boards or the Home Missions Council who have particular contributions to make.

c. Making available, where requested, study and program-building services in problem situations.

WORKING AT DEMOCRACY IN THE SOUTH*

T. B. COWAN

The South is a raw materials area, a colonial dependency in a once expanding but now contracting finance imperialism. The South knows political democracy but in the midst of much wage slavery . . . Can liberty exist without democracy? Can democracy exist while industry and finance are undemocratized? The answer to these questions must be found and lived if democracy is to fulfill itself in newer and richer forms. The South is a national and world symbol of what political democracy without economic democracy does to a people. Political democracy speaks of the good life for the many established and furthered around the rights of the dignity of manhood. Economic autocracy denies in practice the meaningfulness of individuals in their relations. Political democracy is not a social order but a healthy social disorder; it is as Professor Mead of the University of Chicago once interpreted it, an attempt to "institutionalize revolution." But if that is the central article of our political faith it is denied by an economic regimentation of peoples into ranks of wage slaves or poverty.

Democracy is the right to make free choices but economic necessity which knows no law but profit denies this right. Political democracy is neither a despotism nor an anarchy but an endless experiment in human living, a striving after material and spiritual goods never yet realized but provided in our hopes and ideals. Economic power thwarts these hopes and ideals and makes of politics a "subsidized state."

Working arrangements in a democracy are the by-products of a growing self-government, self-regulated obedience to self-recognized law. Working arrangements in our economic order are determined by ledgers and their markings in black or red. Democracy is guaranteed by the eternal quest for justice no matter if new realizations of justice disturbs old orders. Economic consideration would freeze the old order.

* We are disappointed not to have "The Glory of a Hostile Environment," one of Mr. Cowan's talks at the Conference, but it is not in manuscript form. With permission we are reprinting from *Prophetic Religion* for September excerpts from an address made at Blue Ridge.

Democracy calls people to become increasingly aware of their problems, to learn how to deal with them by dealing with them. Economic power has developed injunctions, a master-slave complex, and paternalism as bulwarks against the sharing and solving of problems. Democracy would keep open and free all channels of information. The representatives of privilege would control all the channels of information so that they could rule by indirection—the exploiter would educate the exploited.

Democracy is not a finished thing, can never become a finished thing. When it is thought of as being finished it is finished and a contracting capitalism devours it and then you have fascism.

Whatever good gifts came up out of capitalism in its growing and its expanding period are forgotten in a period of contraction. Then it is that we see the skeletal outline of capitalism which in its marrow is anti-democratic, feudalistic, its mechanisms and motivations utterly dissociated from the common weal. Its institutions are saturated, honeycombed with pyramidal practices; serfs at the base, lords and barons at the apex, stratified servitors and sycophants of high and low degree cooped up between apex and base.

Our land is not yet a democracy but a capitalistic democracy. That may be difficult to imagine for no more two contradictory concepts than democracy and capitalism were ever brought together. Capitalism is capitalistic precisely to the extent that it prevents democracy from being democratic, hence the ease of transition from capitalism to fascism, the one implicitly and the other explicitly rejecting the social logic resident in the democratic ideal. As an illustration of this I have used the South as a tragic illustration.

What to do about it?

We can become aware of our problem, a threatening one for we have examples today of countries with political freedom but no economic security trading their political liberty for a mess of brutalitarian pottage. A people may become so economically desperate, so desperate under the fear of want that political liberty seems to them a small sacrifice. Only those who have known the grim-

ness of this fear have a right to speak on the tragedy of such a sacrifice.

How to stay the coming of the tragic choice between war rations and freedom is hard to state. Capitalism itself seems to be destitute of any democratic economic possibilities. History affords little peaceful guidance for the solving of our problem but gives us many instances of the violent alteration of the class relations of society. Democratizing the instruments of production for "the general welfare," or altering the basis of political democracy to preserve the economic privileges of those who own the instruments of private profits has not been done often without violent upheavals.

I am not troubling to illustrate this by references to Russia, Italy, Germany, Austria, and counter-revolution in Spain. The point I press here is that in looking at these countries we cannot take comfort in the fact that crisis has not yet attacked us in the United States. War slows it up for a time but accelerates it when it is over. Prosperity as a by-product of war or preparation for war cannot go on forever unless we are willing to accept war forever as organic to our way of living.

To be sure we have a more firmly rooted tradition of political democracy than other lands but we cannot draw on this political capital forever. The same tendencies that caused the breakdown of political democracy in other lands are at work here. Partly because we are richer and partly because the habits of democratic institutionalism are stronger are we better able than other countries to stand the awful strain of crisis.

But in the long run (the tempo of which is speeding up by the fact that men eat in short runs) there is not any a priori reason to suppose that our history will be different unless there is such a revival of economic well-being as will enable capitalism to resume on a grander scale than ever before its policy of concessions which alone maintain political democracy. Our present plight with an eleven million unemployed "standing knee deep in wheat" gives no indication of further concessions. The fact that they who eat differently think differently makes our task harder. All of recent planning has hardly altered the contours of our economic heights and depths. Industrial leaders are still suffering from what Veblen called "trained incapacity"—their very abilities function as blindnesses.

The picture is dark yet as one of the characters in *Man's Hope* by Andre Malraux says: "Every situation has at least one positive element, the thing to do is to find it and build on it." Your task and mine is to find the positive elements in our situation and build on them, to use to the fullest the freedom we have in our political democracy to further democracy on social, economic, educational, and cultural fronts. This is the way to make our past, its "institutionalizing of revolution," serve the present for the sake of a richer tomorrow. Democracy carries no magic in its name or in its profession. We must save it by our performances or else . . . What then are some of the positive building points on which we may build. I summarize a few with specific application to the South.

1. The South calls for a higher standard of living for its people than it has ever known.

Political democracies have been marked by a comparatively high standard of living for their peoples but the South as a Colonial dependency has never known it. The safeguarding of this standard of living by the state is being slowly accepted in the country as a whole. Whatever gains have been made along this line by wage and hour laws, by unemployment insurance, accident and sickness benefits, old age pensions must be maintained and furthered.

Wage differentials between the North and the South can no longer be decided on the basis of an emotional hangover that mumbles that it is cheaper to live in the South. Real wages in the South must be determined by an appraisal of the South's actual and potential wealth, its capacity to produce. No longer must we make the negro the barometer of wages. Demands made by whites must include him or there is no hope of higher standards of living.

Questions and answers by Southerners in the South are beginning to reveal the need in the South for an industrial-agrarian working agreement if the South is to experience higher standards of living. The South does not need "one-crop industrial areas" like Detroit for depressions there are as terrible as in "one-crop agricultural areas." The South for a higher standard of living needs an agri-industrial union that will preserve the principle of individual initiative, that will conserve irreplaceable resources, that will strike a more

satisfying balance between farm and factory. The farmer in the South needs help to preserve our basic resource—the land, and he can do that best in a working agreement with industry.

2. This increase of standards of living calls in the South for the constant expansion and strengthening of labor's right to organize and bargain collectively.

Labor in the South is fighting a hard battle. Outside its own divided ranks labor has few friends who see that in terms of economic security their future is with the man on the picket line rather than with the men behind presidential desks.

Very few of us see that the checks and balances in political democracy must be carried over as necessary instruments in the achieving of economic democracy. Labor in the South as elsewhere must develop both economic and political power to meet the combination of economic and political power which confronts him. Labor must have economic power to interfere with the economic processes controlled by the dominant group. Labor must have enough political power to influence or determine the power of the political state which may regard itself as the impartial judge of conflicting interests but which in reality is most susceptible to group pressure.

The group which is able to wield the most economic and political power really determines state policies. If we had such a thing as a pure democracy it could guarantee the resolving of all social conflict to non-violent social tension and thus the increased ability of the underprivileged to use the weight of their numbers would be assured in helping to distribute the privileges of society evenly.

But unfortunately the more dominant groups control not only the State apparatus but the systems of propaganda and education and are thereby able to frustrate most of the potential political power of the disinherited by setting against them the judgment of all but the politically wise. That is why workers lose confidence gradually and sometimes quickly in democratic institutions and put their trust in violence. Violence will increasingly prevail unless the State is given a greater degree in the settlement of social strife.

Your task then is to accept and to further labor's right to organize not merely for higher wages but as a necessary arrangement for the balance of

power in today's struggle for power. In this struggle and for its healthy settlement labor itself, broken as it now is into CIO, AFL, and white, and negro, must federate.

3. One building point that needs to be cleared and strengthened in the South is that of civil liberties.

The South in the main takes without much protest the violation of its civil liberties, not only those guaranteed by the Constitution, but it fails to invoke them as defence against all self-ordained restrictive agencies on freedom. Our real threat to personal freedom is not fully as yet governmental interference but that of controlled and irresponsible non-governmental agencies. Direct restraint by government seems quite remote as yet to school teachers, to faculties of small colleges, editors, and preachers. But the threat of the wrath of powerful minorities centered about economic, political, patriotic, or other issues is an ever present reality.

The loss of earning power, the threat of concerted and continuing boycott, the threat of klans, floggers, fear of want are more terrifying than a jail sentence. The all-too-eager readiness to turn out the National Guard in states must also be watched, and we must voice our protests in the light of facts. Lynching by the mob method or by individual assignment must be fought at every turn. In our demands for civil liberties we must see that the state is on the side of liberty, that protection is afforded by the state as well as against it.

Let us also be wary of men who denounce liberty as a disguise for political dictatorships not only in large areas but in small. Many county politicians who are able to buy and sell so many votes under present poll tax requirements are petty dictators who control the work and food supply of many of our fellow citizens in the South. Civil liberties are more than an institution of our financial regime; they represent human values other than economic, and as you fight for them you keep alive as a by-product the critical temper which is so essential to the maintenance of democracy.

Under the banner of civil liberties fight to see that opposition is never driven underground. It is bad when opposition from any source is obliged to assume conspiratorial form. Then it is born in

the heart of the conspirators that revolution is the only road to power left open to them, and consent is trampled under foot by terrible forms of coercion. "Better," said an ancient Greek, "that all things burst with freedom than with tyranny."

4. Build also on the tradition of local self-government.

I know as you do the messy state of local government in the South but their very corruption should be challenge enough for you to get into them redemptively with all you have, for good local governments, city and state, makes the centralization that dictatorship involves psychologically unattractive.

In the matter of national and local self-government let us hew to this line that democratic ends can never be achieved by undemocratic means. Both Mussolini and Hitler have social objectives which many a democrat could accept. But the gulf that yawns between the democratic state and the totalitarian state is not so much in the realm of objectives as in how governments move toward the realization of those objectives.

The social objectives of a democracy as over against the objectives of the totalitarian state must be formulated out of the democratic process for the sake of the state and the education of the people. Democracy, local and national, if it is to survive, must maintain a supreme interest in how public policy is formed. When the due process of policy making dies, then the citizen becomes an automaton, "we the people" become I the man. The dictatorships of Europe have all been established over people either schooled over centuries to unthinking obedience or only recently trained in the experience of political democracy.

5. One last building point I mention is the church in the South.

One of our southern sociologists, Howard Odum, has said that the church in the South has never led but always been led. It has failed to judge the ways of men by the insights of its professed faith and so it has given priestly sanction to things as they are. The church holds a unique place in the life of the people but it has never used its long established position to confront men and women with the saving-judgment of God so clearly manifest in its land and its people.

It has preached much about faith in God and Christ but its message has lacked ethical content

and demanded no Christian social action. It takes this very revolutionary library of books we call the Bible and makes of it a cross-word puzzle book having to do with the number of the beast or the day and hour of the second coming of Christ. It has never discovered the judgments of God in its own social scene. It talks much about Christ's second coming and does nothing about his first. Churches in the South are distinguished by their social status. Scratch sectarian skins in the South, and you find the same orthodox blood. If the blood test shows traces of liberalism you find that it has swapped God's demand for repentance and righteousness for the commercial consent of civic clubs.

Aspects of the whole truth of Christianity in the South are sick with sentimentality. Religion is up in the clouds which makes it crossless, for no man suffers in soul and body on the earth when he works for things only in heaven. Religion plays up to people in the South but seldom stands up to them. It comforts men but seldom contradicts them. The South knows the church as a social institution but not as the pillar and ground of truth.

It is my hope that here you will come to know God the Lord of History who not only reigns but governs, whose saving-judgments are revealed for eyes to see not only in the South but in our world. I hope that together we will hear God's call to repent and to declare repentance the turning away from our ways that ravage the good earth and the souls and the bodies of men, and a turning to affirmatively and militantly working out in every way of life the demands of God for righteousness whose effect is peace and quietness and confidence forever. These are the effects needed for furthering Democracy in the South and in the nation.

My affirmation of faith in this fight is:

1. I believe in God revealed supremely in the Revolutionary Event in History called Christ who in His judgment-grace on the Cross has overcome the world.

2. I believe in personal democracy that my own life derives from God a real meaning and significance to which I must be completely loyal. That sounds egotistical but an egotist is not one who thinks too much of himself but too poorly of others.

3. I believe in Social Democracy the expansion

of the possibilities of personalities in widest commonalty spread, the search for the promise in every life, the knowing that men reach fullness of life not alone but together.

4. I believe in cultural and intellectual democracy that men have capacity to respond to the ultimate meanings of life, that the best culture should be made accessible to all of the people, that the common people who heard Jesus gladly have rich contributions to make that must secure adequate expression and interpretation, that fresh sources of inspiration are ever found in the life of the people. (If you have met Ma Joad in person or in *Grapes of Wrath* you know this.)

5. I believe in Ethical Democracy of one right for all men everywhere and that those who know this from the Christian wisdom about life must make it known.

6. I believe in political democracy bi-polar in

pattern—the individual and the state. Individual domination means anarchy. State domination means fascism. Individual freedom must be consistent with the common weal. “We the people” are the government. To maintain this power must be safeguarded for we cannot have justice with power or without it.

7. I believe in industrial democracy the organizing of the forces of production and distribution around persons and not around profits.

These things must become more than formulas. We must incarnate them, make them flesh in deeds and acts. Our interests must be as wide as humanity and our sympathies as varied as the quality of human experience. All our intentions and all our doings must be determined by securing in time the Sovereignty of God’s Kingdom over the kingdoms of this earth.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Health Conference

A conference on health in the mountain region of western North Carolina will be held in Asheville, Tuesday and Wednesday, June 10 and 11. Headquarters will be in the Langren Hotel; sessions will be held in one of the downtown churches. This gathering is sponsored by the Committee on Health of the Conference of Southern Mountain Workers. The purpose is to bring together representatives of all agencies interested in health in western North Carolina to study the health problems of the region and think about ways of meeting them together. All centers of mountain work in North Carolina are asked to send workers to the conference, since the impetus of this movement really started with these centers. It is hoped that organizations, agencies, and institutions interested in health in the region will be officially represented.

Interested persons are invited whether they represent any agency or not. Since it is hoped to hold similar conferences in the mountain regions of the other states, leaders in health work from the whole mountain region and especially all members of the

Committee on Health of the Conference of Southern Mountain Workers are invited to attend this conference. Full information may be received by addressing Miss Margaret Forman, Asheville College, Asheville, North Carolina.

First Annual All American Tour of Cooperatives

A tour of American cooperatives has been planned for this summer. Starting in Columbus, Ohio, on July 7, the tour will close in Kansas City on July 19. Some of the types of cooperatives to be visited are: Cooperative grocery stores, rural electric cooperatives, farm machinery plants, cooperative housing, recreation camps, cooperative health associations, college co-ops, cooperative insurance companies, grain elevators, meat packing plants.

A study will also be made of organizations such as the Ohio Farm Bureau Cooperative, Columbus, Ohio; the Cooperative League of the U. S. A. in Chicago; Midland Cooperative Wholesale, Minneapolis, Minnesota; Credit Union National Association, Madison, Wisconsin.

In addition to seeing cooperation in action there will be conferences with cooperative leaders—Dr. James P. Warbasse, Murray D. Lincoln, Howard A. Cowden, E. R. Bowen and others.

This tour is under the auspices of The Cooperative League of the U. S. A. Total cost, including registration, board and room, and transportation, is \$88. Further information may be secured from J. Henry Carpenter, Tour Director, The Cooperative League of the U. S. A., 167 West 12th Street, New York City.

Southeastern Workshop in Community Development

Sponsored by Furman University Summer School and The Greenville County Council for Community Development, the Southeastern Workshop in Community Development will be held on the campus of Furman University, June 9 to July 15, 1941.

The program of study will involve five fields: Philosophy of community development; the socio-economic and governmental aspects of community life; council activities; certain basic skills necessary to good community work; and pre-planning of work for the coming year.

The study of council activities will be concerned primarily with the activities of the Greenville County program, including credit unions, cooperatives, recreational programs, health measures, county library, farm income experiments, adult education centers, and the like. Visits to as many of these activities as possible will be scheduled and conferences with various community and governmental leaders will be arranged.

Workshop leaders will be the regular staff of the Greenville County Council for Community Development: Gordon Blackwell, Laura S. Ebaugh, C. B. Loomis, Margaret C. Lyon, Ralph M. Lyon, W. A. Norvell. To supplement the Council staff the workshop has secured W. H. Stacy, Extension Sociologist in Rural Organization, Iowa State College of Agriculture.

A grant from the General Education Board makes possible a fellowship covering entrance fee and board for each participant accepted by the committee on applications. Furman University will provide lodging without charge. Participants

will be limited to fifty, chosen for their interest in undertaking an experiment in community development, or others with some experience in community development who desire to broaden their understanding and to evaluate their experience. Credit is optional. Requests for applications should be addressed to C. B. Loomis, Director, 209 University Ridge, Greenville, South Carolina.

Penland School of Handicrafts

The twelfth annual session of the Penland School of Handicrafts will begin on June 23 and close on August 23. Craftsmen will want to write to Miss Lucy Morgan, Penland, North Carolina, for an illustrated bulletin telling about the variety of weaving techniques taught—simple card weaving, tapestry weaving, four harness over-shot, summer and winter; of the metal crafts, copper, pewter, and sterling silver; and about the instruction in ceramic design, firing, kiln stacking, study of clays and glazes, and hand-building methods. Many well-known crafts teachers will be present for part or all of the nine weeks, and Mr. Rupert Peters, supervisor of visual education in Kansas City public schools, will be the director of the session.

Writers Workshop

If you are interested in studying writing you will be glad to know that Highlander Folk School is conducting its third annual Writers Workshop this summer. Classes, beginning July 28 and continuing through August 9, will include: Technique of the short story, fiction writing generally; play-writing-skit, one-act, full length; article writing, feature stories; and journalism.

Special emphasis will be placed on a study of the South and the interests and problems of southern writers, but instruction will be flexible, concentrating on the problems arising from each student's work.

Among the teachers will be Charles W. Ferguson, an associate editor of *The Readers Digest* and author of *Fifty Million Brothers*.

Total cost of the session is only \$30; one week \$15.

Requests for additional information should be addressed to Leon Wilson, Highlander Folk School, Monteagle, Tennessee.

WHAT TO READ

CONDUCTED BY GLYN A. MORRIS

Encouragement to those who seek a more adjustable curriculum for secondary schools may be found in the condensed report in the *Education Digest* for March, 1941, which gives some implications of the eight-year study of secondary education. It indicates clues for those who wish more information on a report which, after studying the college work of graduates from thirty secondary schools over a period of years, advises that "there is no discoverable relationship between the pattern of school subjects and success in college."

Arthur M. Bannerman, Principal of the Asheville Farm School, suggests that the article in *The New York Times Magazine* for March 30, 1941, entitled "Dartmouth Farm Aid," by Robert R. Rogers, makes "a practical approach to sacrificial service by an institution in a depressed community."

For those who are concerned about democracy President Francis S. Hutchins, of Berea, recommends an article in *School and Society* for November 23, 1940, from which he quotes:

To know and to be able to answer is our surest defense against these new weapons The defense against a bad idea is a better idea; the defense against a half-truth is a whole truth; the defense against propaganda is education and it is in education that democracies must place their trust.

Eugene Smathers, of Big Lick, Tennessee, com-

mends *The City of Man*, A Declaration on World Democracy, Viking Press, New York, 1941, with this comment: "required reading for all interested in future of democracy." Mr. Smathers also suggests that the article by Malcolm B. Dana entitled "Christian Education" which appeared in *Prophetic Religion*, Vol. V, No. 1, February-March, 1941, pp 8-11, is stimulating for those concerned with the problem of social reconstruction. He recommends also "Guideposts for Rural Youth," a pamphlet recently issued by the American Youth Commission, as giving clues to practical things which communities can do to improve the situation of rural youth.

Orrin L. Keener recommends *Farmers in a Changing World*, the 1940 Yearbook of Agriculture (which may be secured through your congressman), as a "rich source of information for social workers, discussion group leaders, teachers and others interested in rural life." Part 5, which includes a chapter on "Education for Rural Life" by Edwin R. Embree and "A Philosophy of Life for the Farmer and Others" by William E. Hocking, looks particularly interesting.

The Third Revolution, reported in *Time* for March 10 (p 69), explains that the rapid growth and support of the NYA and CCC indicate the public's willingness to support a new kind of educational system and has some important implications for those concerned with practical training for youth.

It requires greater courage in one not yet perfect to walk in the way of perfection than to undergo an instant martyrdom; for perfection is not attained to at once, unless our Lord grant that grace by a special privilege; yet the world, when it sees any one beginning to travel on that road, insists on his becoming perfect at once, and a thousand leagues off detects in him a fault, which after all may be a virtue.

—St. Teresa of Jesus

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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GEORGE M. NELL is pastor of a rural parish in southern Illinois and Director of Co-op Parish Activities Service, Effingham, Illinois.

GEORGE C. BELLINGRATH, Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School, Rabun Gap, Georgia, A. L. Roberts, Asheville Farm School, Swannanoa, North Carolina, and C. C. Simonton, Pleasant Hill Academy, Pleasant Hill, Tennessee, are reporting in this issue for groups rather than giving their own particular views on the subjects.

Under "New Directions of Service" the reporters speak of the work which they and their co-workers are doing.

T. B. COWAN, who led the two devotional periods of the Conference, is pastor of the Norris Religious Fellowship, Norris, Tennessee.